764 They dig a round hole, three feet deep, in a hut, so that it will be under cover. They bathe the body, redden it all over, anoint the hair with oil, and truss it up as carefully as for one of their great feasts. They wrap the deceased in a cotton hammock and then put him in the hole in nearly the same posture as the child is in the womb of his mother, not upside down nor with the face against the ground, but straight, the feet below, the head up and resting on the knees. They then cover the hole with a board. That done, the women sit around the grave on their heels and cry, while their husbands clasp them with the left hand and stroke their arm with the right hand as if to lessen the pain. All the women strike up a lugubrious song punctuated with sighs and cries. While lamenting they throw dirt in the hole with their hands and then build a fire over it. They burn the dead man's old clothes or give them away. If the deceased had slaves, they kill them—but the slaves usually run away, and they are not chased.

765 The children of the deceased or his wife cut their hair in sign of mourning. They also fast one or two [7]37 months. When Father Raymond asked them if their fast did the dead any good, they said no, but that those who did not fast would age quicker because of it, or would not have a firm footing, would not see the fish in the water, or would be surprised by their enemies. These reasons seem pertinent even to the aged.

If one of the relatives is unable to attend the funeral, he comes to visit the grave and weeps there with the parents of the deceased. When they believe the body is decomposed, they again assemble at the tomb, and weep and trample over the grave. On the anniversary of the death they come to drown their melancholy and the memory of the deceased in an abyss of ouicou.

● 775 Otherwise concerning the soul after death, they have the notion that each man has three souls. One in his head, which is felt beating at the temples; another in the arms, which manifests itself in the pulse; and the other in the heart, which makes its movement strongly felt.

The soul of the heart goes directly to heaven to be blessedly happy, although they are unable to say just what this felicity consists in. The soul of the arm and of the head becomes maboya, that is, an evil spirit which torments them. They fear the maboya extremely.

775 for they attribute to them all of their frights, such as happened to one who, sleeping on his left side, pressed his spleen and had bad dreams as a result. Father Raymond noticed this and woke the man, and the Carib was grateful to him for having rescued him from the clutches of mabeya, of whom he recounted several marvels. However, he could not conceive that this was only a dream.

[76] They believe there are still other evil spirits at the edge of the sea who cause their shipwrecks and whom they call oumokou. They also believe in some sort of place of torment in the middle of the earth, called touvalik, where the wicked go.

080 We know nothing more at present of the customs of our Caribs which merits writing down. It is true that we have recorded a great number of their follies, which it was perhaps not necessary to write down, and which were perhaps even unworthy of recording. We realized this, which is why we omitted many others which would have filled a large [79] book. However, we have not left them all out, although we would have preferred to do so, because the reader would not have been able to know their temperament or their barbarism if we had not rather plainly represented their customs, although brutal and truly savage.

After the god of a boye has drunk well he says "I am drunk, much hindered, and embarrassed." When a sacrifice is offered to him he calls his companions. They drink up the contents of all of the large pots, or at least pretend to do so. When they wish to leave, they practice a deception upon the hearing of the assembly. They tip their calabash drinking cups back into the large pots, and according to the sound it makes you might think that the pots are empty. However, the next morning these same pots are full which seems to the Caribs to be a great miracle. The old men and the most important among them gather to drink it. But the false gods have ordered it to be drunk upon an empty stomach, and also under the condition that they have not touched their wives during the night. You might judge it to be a monkey trick of the devil to imitate our sacrament. [148]

The Caribs believe that the moon is a man, and that once upon a time the moon saw a girl while she was asleep and he made her pregnant. This obliged the mother to give the girl a person to watch over her. The guardian surprised the moon one night and blackened him with genipap, in order to recognize the culprit. The Caribs say this is the reason for the spots on the moon which appear today. The child born from the girl was named Hiâli, and he later laid the first foundations of the Carib nation. The hummingbird was chosen to carry Hiâli to his father, and having faithfully performed its task, it obtained as a reward a beautiful crest for its head and its feathers were turned many colors. [293] The boyes have enough temerity to claim that they fly up to the moon in the heavens. One day a boye told me about his trip there. I recognized his foolishness when he said the moon looked like open rocks with trickling water everywhere. It is even sometimes said that their false gods raise them visibly and that the roof of the house opens itself to let them through it. The simple people do not understand that this is done by magic, and so they say with great admiration "he has wings." [234] The false gods address the Caribs as kuéyou-ago in order to flatter them. These false gods do not call them "under the moon" but rather "over the sun," if I may express myself in this way. [283]

The Caribs have never heard about Pythagoras, but nevertheless they seem to be imbued with the idea of metempsychosis, for they have an expression which means "men do not become stones." [188] They do not know what it is to pray to God, although they believe it to be

601 Some authors suspect the native Americans to be Jews exiled to these places. I do not know if they are, but I well know that the children of two brothers call themselves brothers, and male cousins marry female cousins born from their own aunts. Moreover, they often refer to a person as father of such a child, they never have surnames, they wash themselves frequently, and they oil their hair. 32 They never eat salt, fat, or pork, and they abstain from a number of 826 birds and fish. Still, I do not believe that at the present time they fast for religious motives -- except for the boyes -- because I have learned from them that if they eat pork they believe that their children will be born with twisted feet. If they eat parrot or manatee they believe that their children might have small, round eyes like these animals, and if they eat garfish or eel the children might have a tapered nose. However, nowadays they eat what we eat when they are among us. I have noticed that those Caribs who eat with us are the most frequently sick and die earlier. This is because the different qualities of our various meats alter their constitution. [275]

852 Eight days after the birth of a child they summon someone to 551 pierce his ears, his lower lip, and the place between his nostrils. They pass string through these places in order to make openings to attach the pendants when the child grows up. These pendants are sometimes made of small caracoli, or glass beads, while others only use five or six cotton threads. If they have pins or hooks they put these through the lower lip. They give the child his name at this same time. This name is very often that of a dead grandfather or a [715] dead grandmother in order to make him or her live again in the person of the child. When the child grows up it changes or retains the name as it likes. [287]

551 The Carib husbands and even their wives are rarely called by their names, and it seems criminal even to think of it. They only pronounce the first syllables, and even these are pronounced only in their absence, for in their presence they would be offended. They use circumlocutions, saying father of such and such a child, for they are not afraid of calling children by their names. In their drinking parties when they are half drunk they think it a great honor to be called by the name of the Arawak that they have killed. Captain Baron was called Callamténa when he was in a state of drunkenness. He took another captain by the hand and in front of all the principal

3: Bouton--1 M-4 (no date) 1640 ST13 Callinago ST13
(ca. 1630)

Concerning the Savages Called Caribs

1. Religion

¶6 It is not possible to state the true number of the Caribs on Martinique, because they are continually and actively visiting and passing among those of Dominica and the other islands. Sometimes there are many Caribs here and sometimes fewer. It is true that fear and distrust of the French has caused many of them to leave this island, although we are not at war with them (unlike the French of Guadeloupe). No religion is recognized among them. Like the
● ¶75 Canadian Indians they have some recognition of the immortality of the soul, because for a few days they give to the souls of the dead clothes, food, and small belongings for their use. I believe that they do not trouble themselves with knowing what becomes of these souls; at least we have never been able to draw this information out of them. Possibly we should learn more if we were to live among them or they among us. At the present time they are greatly separated from us by inaccessible hills, so that we see them rarely and only when they come by sea to trade with the French.

¶76 They know by experience, at their cost, that there are spirits, and also the devil whom they call maboya, who sometimes beats them to death. The devil is not strong among them while they are with the French, but when they return they are cruelly tormented as punishment by the devil because of their visit. They also admit that the
[¶81] sign of the cross is able to ward off the maboya. Most of them have an opening in their houses through which they say he enters and leaves. They do not render him any honor that I know, nor offer him sacrifice. They also recognize a god which they call chemin who does not treat them any better than the maboya does. It is necessary that someone
[¶81] among them have a special communication with this spirit because he predicts future events which they can only learn through him. For example, they day before we arrived an old Carib woman told a Frenchman that a great French ship would arrive the next day. What she said was true.

¶78 They say that there is a serpent in Dominica which has the power
¶25 of making itself large or small and that it has a ruby or gem of the same luster in the middle of its forehead. It takes this gem off when

785 while others more robust satisfy themselves for nine or ten days with
a bit of bread and water. If they did not hold to this rigorous ab-
262 stinence they would be considered weaklings. They are also super-
stitious in their avoidance of salt, pig meat, tortoises, manatees,
fat, eggs and a large number of animals which would have been con-
sidered unclean according to the law of Moses. They also have a
582 custom of marrying female first cousins; cousins of the sons of two
brothers call themselves brothers. They have no names and they
551 ordinarily call a man the son of so and so, as the Jews are accustomed
to do. This has given rise to the opinion that they were descended
from Jews, but no reasons are provided by them which might indicate
that they practice all of these customs for religious reasons, so that
it is not worth while to infer any consequences from this fact.

775 They believe in the immortality of the soul, but say that each
773 man has three souls; one in the heart, one in the head, and another
in the arm. The soul in the heart manifests itself by its throbbing
and goes straight to heaven upon death to be very happy there. The
souls in the arm and head manifest themselves by the beating of the
pulse and throb of the arteries. They become maboyas, that is to say,
evil spirits, which they believe to be the cause of everything sinister
and disastrous.

Concerning Birth, Education and Marriage, of the Caribs

498 Since nature was corrupted by the wickedness of our first parents,
it has been absolutely necessary to have laws to enlighten reason and
to direct it without error to the correct path of truth. It should not
astonish us if the birth, life, and customs of our unenlightened Caribs
are filled with superstition, errors, and nonsense which brings amuse-
ment at the same time that it brings tears to the eyes of those who
have true Christian sentiments.

504 Among their nonsense which upset me the most was a superstition
practised by men at the birth of their children. Women give birth
with little pain, and if labor is difficult for some of them they know
how to relieve it using a special root as a remedy and which has an

5: Rouse E-4 (no date) 1948 ST13 Callinago ST13
(1650-1700)

of the chiefs, who gave notice several days in advance so that food and 527
drink could be prepared. The feast took place in the carbet, but both men and women, dressed in their best, participated. They spent all day and most of the night in eating, drinking, singing, and dancing, usually becoming quite drunk.

Both men and women participated in the singing, not only at the 533
feasts but also to pass the time of day. Most songs had to do with warfare; others dealt with birds, fish, and women.

Dancing seems to have been confined to the feasts (pl. 95). Men and 535
women performed alone or together. They moved in a circle, dancing in pairs, arm in arm. The men performed violently, but the women moved only their feet. The dances were accompanied by songs, the drum, the rattle, a stringed instrument, and the flute. The drum, hollowed from a log, 534
had a single head of skin. The rattle consisted of a gourd with a wooden handle. The stringed instrument, too, was of gourd; it had a single string. The flutes were made of bamboo or the bones of an enemy.[8]

Carib men played flutes in the morning, while their wives prepared breakfast. They used conch-shell trumpets for signaling while on raids or when hunting or fishing; at night they also had recourse to signal flares.

Intoxicants and narcotics.—They were fond of drinking and made 273
several different kinds of beer (olicou) from sweetpotatoes or from a mixture of sweetpotatoes and manioc. The women chewed this material, allowed it to ferment for several days, and then strained it. They also brewed beer from the coarser manioc bread which they laid aside until it became muddy.

The *Carib* smoked tobacco, rolling it into cigars like those of the 276
Arawak.[9] There is no mention of snuff, but tobacco chewing was common. The *Carib* dried the leaves over the fire, softened them with sea water, and kneaded them into rolls which served as money. Before chewing they added ashes and packed the quid between the lip and gum.

RELIGION AND SHAMANISM

The *Carib* believed in a plurality of souls, which they associated with 775
the beating of the heart and arteries. The soul in the heart was supposed 777
to go to an earthlike paradise in heaven, where it became part of a company of good spirits, or akambouc.[10] The souls in the rest of the body either stayed in the bones after death or went into the forests or seashores. They were regarded as evil spirits, maboyas; those in the sea had a special name, ouicom.

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[8] Besides the drum and the stringed instrument is mentioned in all the sources. They may have been historic developments.

[9] Labat (1931, p. 96) observed men smoking for pleasure. Du Tertre (1667, p. 368), however, describes only the use of tobacco by shamans during curing ceremonies.

[10] Rouse believed that the paradise was an earth rather than in the heavens and that only the successful warriors went there, the rest of the people being found to live after death in another and more human land.

5: Rouse E-4 (no date) 1948 ST13 Callinago ST13 (1650-1700)

715 The good spirits (akamboue) were believed to be invisible, except at night when they took the form of bats. Each *Carib* had one of them as his personal deity (ichieri). From time to time, particularly during feasts, he set an offering for his deity upon a table at the end of his hut; it consisted of manioc bread and the first of his fruits; its purpose was to insure good crops and to safeguard health. There were no idols on the table, as among the *Arawak*, and no ceremony of worship. When a man died it was believed that his ichieri carried the soul of his heart to heaven.

To the evil spirits (maboya) were attributed all disagreeable and frightening occurrences, such as nightmares, sickness, shipwrecks, thunder, hurricanes, earthquakes, and eclipses of the moon (the occasion for an all-night dance). The maboya were invisible, but a bad odor sometimes revealed their presence. Each *Carib* wore a small carved image of a maboya around his neck to frighten off the other maboya.

716 It was the function of the shamans (boyes) to control the maboya. Each shaman had one of them as his own personal deity which he obtained at the ceremony closing his period of apprenticeship to one of the older shamans. After a fast of 5 months, the youth was brought into the carbet, before a table on which manioc bread, fruit, and ouicou had been placed. The older shaman sang a song to call his own maboya to the carbet and then blew out cigar smoke, tickling the spirit in the nose and further enticing him into the carbet. Immediately the maboya fell into the hut and was seated upon a hammock to receive the food offering. His shaman then asked him for a spirit for the apprentice. This second maboya appeared and harangued the gathering on the power which the new shaman was to have.[11]

Comparable ceremonies took place at frequent intervals to drive away other maboya who had caused evil, to bring revenge upon an enemy, to influence the course of warfare, to prophecy future events, or to cause diseases. These ceremonies were always held at night and in the dark, since the spirits abhorred light. The food offerings, and sometimes also blood, were contributed by the spectators, who sat on stools at the opposite end of the hut, but the shamans appropriated them for their own use after the ceremonies. The maboya appeared in various shapes; often it entered the body of an old woman to give an oracular answer. Sometimes it could be heard eating the food offering, or quarreling with another spirit whom it had accused of causing some evil.

Some shamans kept in their houses the hair or bones of their ancestors, which were supposed to contain maboya. The shamans put them into gourds or wrapped them in cotton; sometimes they made small cotton

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[11] The above account is taken largely from Breton (1647-57, vol. 2, pp. 383-388). Le Breton (1664, pp. 235-236) states on the contrary, that the apparition went to the maboya. His body was rubbed with grass and with feathers so that he could fly, and he was made to take tobacco juice to induce unconsciousness.

6: Taylor E-5 (1930-1937) 1938
ST13 Callinago ST13

his widow assured me that it was useless for me to try to save their 754
10-year-old daughter, as the child had fallen under the same spell as the father, and had been sick ever since the latter's death. The girl was well grown, but very thin, and had swellings on neck and shoulders. She said her whole body hurt her. At the time I last saw her alive she kept vomiting a light colorless froth, and had a very quick pulse and normal temperature. At her own request I procured eggs and milk for her, and sent for the doctor on my own responsibility. But the message was either distorted or misunderstood, for the doctor neither sent any word nor put in an appearance; and when, 5 days later, the girl died, she was buried without a certificate, as is customary in the reserve. If, as is probable, it was a case of tubercular meningitis, an immediate operation might have saved the child's life.

Death is announced as soon as it takes place by a single protracted 764
blast of the conque shell (corne lambi). Law and hygiene demand [765]
that burial take place within 24 hours (though Labat records having seen the body of a Carib dead several months and perfectly preserved through the use of roucou, *Bixa orellana*), but this is preceded, whenever possible, by a wake to which all and sundry come to make pigs of themselves on the rum provided. When the last "grog" is drunk and the coffin—made on the spot by some of the men present—nailed down, a procession is formed to conduct the corpse to the little cemetery of Sainte Marie, the last home of the last Antilleans. The reading of a French prayer by some old woman more literate than the rest, the tolling of a cracked bell, and the coffin is bestowed in a hastily dug grave almost within reach of the Atlantic waves. Burial in the foetal posture under the floor of the karbé was suppressed by the priests some 70 years ago. The depth of the grave as dug today is supposed to be equal to the length of the body.

Eight days after the burial a sort of second wake is held in the house 765
where the deceased died. In the event of this not having been his or her usual abode, two wakes, or "prières," as they are called, are held. The deathbed is decorated with white flowers, candles, and objects having belonged to the dead man or woman. Until midnight women and girls sit around a table and sing French canticques, while men and boys wander about, chatting and drinking. Fires are then lighted outside the house and cocoa and cassava bread prepared and offered to those present. At this time the girls usually pair off with the boys and disappear into the bushes, while the older men and women sit round the fire drinking rum and telling tales and conundrums. Sometimes a sort of ronde, or Reigel, is danced around the fire before the dispersal at daybreak. The meaning and object of this ceremony [776]
seems to be a kind of spiritual fumigation to rid the house of the now nefarious spirit of the new dead, which continues to lurk there after burial, as perhaps also of the evil powers that caused the death.

9: Ober N-5 (1876-1878) 1895
ST13 Callinago ST13

in shape they are robust, well-formed, with
small hands and feet, in color decidedly light, and some even fair, their complexion being of a yellowish cast. They make canoes and woven baskets, after the manner of the aborigines, are skilled fishers and sometimes hunters, and are altogether trusty and superior in many respects to the blacks.

Several writers have described the Caribs during various periods in their history since coming into notice, but I will select from them one who wrote about two hundred years ago, whose pages bear every evidence of honesty and authenticity. At that time the English were mainly in possession of the islands. He says: "They go stark naked, both men and women; though the Christians have conversed very much amongst them, yet have all their persuasions to induce them to cover themselves been to no purpose. . . . They change their natural color by dyeing their bodies with roucou, which makes them red all over. . . . They also adorn the crown of the head with a little hat made of bird's feathers of different colors. . . . They bore their ears, nose, lips, for the insertion of ornaments. . . . About their necks they wear necklaces made of the bones of their enemies, teeth of agoutis, etc. . . . On great occasions, they wear scarfs and girdles of feathers. . . . Their most valued ornaments were gorgets of copper, obtained from the Arrowaks by plunder, crescent-shaped and shining, and these are, most frequently, the only possessions they leave their children at death. . . . They wear cotton cloth and can dye it in various colors, chiefly red; they had hammocks when found by Columbus. . . . They made fine pottery, which they baked in kilns, and also wove fine baskets. . . . They cultivated their land in common. . . . They buried the corpse of a chief, or head of a family, in the centre of his own dwelling. . . . Their heaven seems to have been a sort of Mohammedan paradise of houris and harems for the brave. . . . They raised rustic altars, placing upon them fruits and flowers. . . . The Caribs have

9: Ober N-5 (1876-1878) 1895
ST13 Callinago ST13

192 and large buttocks, and most of them in good plight. Their mouths are not over large, and their teeth are perfectly white and close. True it is, their complexion is of an olive
[309] color, naturally; their foreheads and noses are flat, not naturally, but by artifice; for their mothers crush them down at their birth, as also during the time they suckle them, imagining it a kind of beauty and perfection. . . . They have large and thick feet, because they go barefoot, and
782 withal so hard that they defie woods and rocks. . . . They believed in evil spirits, and sought to propitiate them by
773 presents of game, fruits, etc. They believe that they have as many souls as they feel beatings of the arteries in their bodies, besides the principal one, which is in their heart, and goes to heaven with its god, who carries it thither, to live with other gods; and they imagine they there live the same life as man lives here below. For they do not think the soul to be so far immaterial as to be invisible; but they affirm it to be *subtile*, and of thin substance, as a purified body; and they have but the same word to signify heart and soul. Other souls, not in the heart, reside in the forest and by the seashore; the former they called *Maïbouyas*, the latter *Oumeloe*. . . . They believe they go after death to live in certain
● 775 fortunate islands, where they have Arrowak slaves to serve them, swim unwearied in placid streams, and eat of delicious
821 fruits. . . . Of the thunder, God's voice, they are extremely
764 afraid. They were prone to leave their houses (huts) after
787 the death of an inmate. It is related, that a young Carib, having been converted to Christianity and taken to France, where he was shown many strange things, at which he showed no astonishment, returned to his tribe, threw off the clothes of civilization, and painted his body with *rocou*, be-
467 coming as wild a savage as before. . . . As to the division of labor, the men made the huts and kept them in repair, procured fish and game, also labored some in the fields; the women attended to the domestic duties, painted their husbands with rocou, and spun the cotton yarn, wove ham-
mocks, etc.

11: Taylor E-5 (ca. 1930-1937)1946
ST13 Callinago ST13

Caribs' subsequent fixation in an ever-dwindling number of islands or districts thereof must have hastened this process. Traditionally inclined to seek their fortune in seafaring and piracy, their subsistence in hunting and fishing, the Island men were increasingly forced to depend for economic security on the despised horticulture of their womenfolk.[12]

Dominica
Barrau Wars Issue

12 *Addendum on death customs and beliefs:* The following notes, secured on the Carib Reserve in January 1946, belong properly with my *Carib Folk-Beliefs and Customs from Dominica, B. W. I.* (Southwestern Journal of Anthropology, vol. 1, pp. 507-510, 1945).

The water with which the corpse was washed is kept until the interment, to be thrown after the departing coffin. Then everything in the house (with the following exceptions) is taken out into the yard to be washed or scrubbed immediately. However, the personal clothing last worn by the deceased, as well as the bed and bedding on which he died, must be left untouched, with a light burning on the bed itself, until after "la prière" or eighth day wake. Not until after the latter rite has taken place can the dead person's soul be expected to "know that he is dead" and to take its departure.

In removing a troublesome mouth from his plate of corn, some days after his father-in-law's death, a young Carib man remarked to me: "It certainly must be Jimmy [the deceased] who sends the rats and wants his share."

Another (unwarranted) belief that I only recently discovered is to the effect that madness is usually caused by "somebody setting a mauké upon you."